



News Release

May 11, 2005

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Updates List of Candidates for Endangered Species Act Listing: Demonstrates Value of Candidate Conservation Programs

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Cooperative efforts with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's many partners has resulted in conservation of two animals that had been in line for listing under the Endangered Species Act and resulted in the removal of these species from the candidate list, the Service announced today. The candidate list details plants and animals that may warrant Federal protection under the Act. The announcement came as the Service's Candidate Notice of Review was published in today's Federal Register.

"The candidate list helps us focus proactive attention on species in need of conservation. This year, we were able to remove two species as candidates for listing under the Endangered Species Act -- the Camp Shelby burrowing crayfish and Holsinger's cave beetle. Because of joint candidate conservation efforts with our partners, significant threats to these species have been removed," said Acting Service Director Matt Hogan. "While these animals may sound unimportant, both of them are indicators of the health of the environment we all share. Ensuring the conservation of these species is a victory for all of us."

Actions identified in a Candidate Conservation Agreement for the Camp Shelby burrowing crayfish were key to the Service's determination that listing the species as threatened or endangered is no longer warranted. Candidate Conservation Agreements are formal agreements between the Service and others to address the needs of proposed or candidate species, or species likely to become candidates, before they become listed as endangered or threatened. Participants in these agreements voluntarily commit to implementing specific

actions that will remove or reduce the threats to these species, thereby contributing to stabilizing or restoring the species so that listing is no longer necessary. The Candidate Conservation Agreement for the Camp Shelby burrowing crayfish was jointly developed by the Service, the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks, the Mississippi Army National Guard, and the U.S. Forest Service.

Cooperative conservation efforts that led to removing the Holsinger's cave beetle from candidate status included work by the Service with the State of Virginia and a private landowner to address threats to the species.

The Notice of Review also includes five new candidate species added since it was last published in 2004. In addition to the two species removed from candidate status as a result of conservation efforts, the Service removed two other species from the list of candidates due to changes in their taxonomic status. The updates result in a net total of 286 candidate species recognized by the Service.

If the Service has sufficient information on biological status and threats to propose listing a species as threatened or endangered, but is precluded from taking action by other, higher listing priorities, the species becomes a candidate species. The new candidate species included in the Notice are:

- Two plants: the Yadkin River goldenrod found in Stanly and Montgomery Counties, North Carolina; and the Pagosa skyrocket found in Archuleta County, Colorado.
- One fish: the sicklefin redbreast, found in Georgia and North Carolina
- One insect: the Miami blue butterfly found in southern Florida
- One crustacean: the diminutive amphipod, found in the San Solomon Springs System in Reeves & Jeff Davis Counties, Texas

The Service also publishes an updated Candidate Notice of Review to solicit new information on the status of candidate species and threats to their survival. Service biologists rely on a variety of sources for the scientific determination of whether a species may warrant listing under the Act, including information from private, university and government scientists, local, State and Federal land management and planning agencies and private citizens.

In addition, the Notice informs the public about species the Service is considering proposing for protection. This notice includes 21 domestic animal species that have already been proposed for addition to the list of endangered and threatened wildlife and plants, but for which a final listing determination has not been made. A proposal undergoes public review and comment before a final decision is made.

Also in the Notice, the Service reassessed its "warranted-but-precluded" findings for 261 species already identified by the Service as candidate species, that citizens petitioned the Service to list, as provided for in the

Endangered Species Act.

In making a warranted-but-precluded finding in response to a petition, the Service determines there is enough biological information to warrant a proposal to list the species, but that development of a proposal is precluded by the need to act on other listing actions of higher priority. A warranted-but-precluded finding is equivalent to a determination that a species is a candidate for listing. The Act requires the Service to conduct an annual review of all warranted-but-precluded petition findings. In its reassessment, the Service found that listing all of these species was still warranted-but-precluded.

The complete Notice and list of candidates and proposed species appear in today's Federal Register.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 545 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resources offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign and Native American tribal governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

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